DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 242 FL 020 101

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TITLE The Sound of Silent Textbooks.
PUB DATE 87
NOTE 17p.; In: Language and Learning Materials. AFinLA Yearbook 1987; see FL 020 099.
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *English (Second Language); Finnish; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Instructional Materials; *Pronunciation Instruction; *Second Language Learning; *Textbook Content; *Textbook Preparation; Uncommonly Taught Languages

ABSTRACT

The extent to which Finnish textbooks pay sufficient attention to pronunciation in English language courses is discussed, including decisions on the choice of accent (e.g., British or American English). Other issues include the choice of phonetic symbols, keys to the symbols, segmental sounds that reveal personality, weak forms, and elision and assimilation. It is concluded that the problems facing textbook writers attempting to present sound on the silent written page are enormous and are complicated by publishers' technical printing and space problems. Contains 26 references. (LB)

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THE SOUND OF SILENT TEXTBOOKS

ABSTRACT

School textbooks do not speak and learners cannot listen to textbooks, so how can textbooks present a good pronunciation model to learners? Without an accompanying teacher or tape-recording, books can only present a model indirectly, by symbols, graphically. But what symbols should be used? For both segmental and suprasegmental features, how broad or narrow should the transcription be? Do learners need a detailed description of grammatical, emotional and discourse prosodic features, or is it better (easier? safer?) to leave such things well alone? ... Textbook writers face enormous problems in deciding how to present sounds silently, a problem compounded not only by the current emphasis on the development of communicative competence rather than linguistic accuracy, but also by the present uncertainty as to the relative value of the time devoted to pronunciation in the context of the total language course. Textbooks can only present a limited amount of information (grammar, vocabulary, cultural background, etc.), but assuming teachers, textbook writers and publishers believe there is a place and some room for pronunciation teaching, i.e. for sound in textbooks, what phonetic information should or could be included, and how much?

It has been said that pronunciation is the alpha and omega of language learning: in the initial stages of learning a language pronunciation accuracy (or mispronunciation tolerance) is sometimes more important for elementary communication than a wide range of vocabulary or a firm mastery of basic grammar; and in the really advanced stages of learning a language it is usually the foreign accent rather than faulty grammar or lacunae of vocabulary that betrays the learner as a non-native speaker. Whether we accept this rather grand picture of pronunciation or not, most people probably accept the idea that good pronunciation should be acquired as early as possible in the learning of English. Now obviously the teacher is an important aid and model for the learner, as also the recordings of native speakers on the tapes and cassettes which are used in the lessons.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

But what about the Finnish textbooks which are used? How much attention do textbooks pay to pronunciation and what help do they give the learner for independent learning both in the classroom and at home? In brief, how much information about sound is presented in textbooks, which are of necessity silent?

For our purposes here one might expect it to be logical and useful to divide language textbooks into two groups, the division being based on the teaching situation of the teacher. Teachers in schools face a particularly difficult situation in that time is severely limited and the ultimate goal of their language course is the Finnish school leaving exam, which, unlike comparable final school exams in other countries in Europe, has (deplorably) no speaking/productive requirement at all: admittedly there is a listening comprehension component to the exam, but there is no oral exam where pupils are required to speak English. In other words there is no examination reason for presenting sound for production purposes in school textbooks (or indeed in the lessons) as opposed to sound for broad recognition purposes. Teachers in adult evening classes, on the other hand, and teachers in colleges and universities, face an entirely different situation: time may again be limited but the goals of the course are not so rigidly set by an examining board which is outside the teacher's control. As a result, apart from courses which are specifically designed to foster merely a reading knowledge of English, courses may devote as much time to pronunciation as the teacher thinks fit. This broad difference in teaching situation clearly suggests two different groups of books when one examines textbooks for their pronunciation content: one set of books for pupils aiming at the school leaving exam; and one set of books designed for evening classes, adult learners and university students.

However, all the textbooks of English which I have examined present some information about pronunciation, the only difference really being in the matter of quantity and quality. All of them seem to give at least a straight phonemic transcription of new vocabulary elements[1], but some books also give a brief description of the differences in place and manner of articulation of related Finnish and English phonemes, and some even attempt to give a diagrammatic presentation of basic intonation patterns. In other words, despite the enormous problems involved in the silent presentation of sound, all textbook writers and publishers seem to acknowledge the fact that pronunciation is important.

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CHOICE OF ACCENT

Perhaps the first major pronunciation problem that textbook writers face is the choice of which accent of English to present. Nevertheless, it seems that British Received Pronunciation is the standard which is widely accepted as the norm, and there seems to be little recognition of the fact that some people speak with an American accent - despite the fact that some of the texts used in the book may be American English! Admittedly most textbooks now note differences in vocabulary, clearly marking words in vocabulary lists as either 'US' or 'GB'. But generally speaking there is no attempt to present a systematic account of American as opposed to RP pronunciation. Thus student is ['stju:dənt] not ['stu:dənt], ranch is [rɑ:nʧ] not [rænʧ], card is [kɑ:d] not [kɑrd], etc. Unfortunately of course the problem of American pronunciation is not helped by the fact that there is as yet no American accent which is accepted as a standard for English language teaching purposes. There is indeed no readily available modern up-to-date pronunciation dictionary of American English. Moreover, the various sets of phonetic symbols used for American English (e.g. in Ladefoged 1975, and in Kenyon and Knott 1953), particularly for American vowel sounds, are inevitably different to the set used for RP. However, there are no really valid reasons (except space?) why Finnish textbook writers and publishers could not transcribe both major varieties of English. One possible convention for dual variety presentation is to be found in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Procter 1978): the RP form is given first and major differences in American pronunciation are then given after a double bar. For example, assume [ə'sju:m ‖ ə'su:m], lieutenant [lef'tenənt ‖ lu:-]. Full attention is not paid to minor discrepancies in vowel qualities, but as the book is intended for the general reader this deficiency is understandable. In my opinion Longman's convention is an admirable one well worth emulating, but I fear that Finnish publishers will argue that such a convention would be too costly in terms of space and printing.

The choice of accent, however, is even more complicated than this: there are other important varieties of English apart from British and American. The problem is particularly acute for school textbook writers: some recordings used for the listening comprehension exam in the *yli-oppilastutkinto* involve speakers with noticeably non-British and non-American accents. But is it reasonable to expect textbooks to indicate the

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pronunciation of words in all (native) accents of English? The answer is obvious, but should one therefore say that the *ylioppilastutkinto* should limit itself to American and British English? The answer to that question, however, is perhaps not quite so straightforward.

CHOICE OF PHONETIC SYMBOLS

The second major problem facing textbook writers is the choice of phonetic symbols, particularly the symbols for presenting the vowel sounds. In Britain ten years ago there was still major disagreement amongst phoneticians (and indeed publishers) as to what symbols to use for RP. However, a broad consensus emerged during the late 1970s. First A.C. Gimson devised and advocated a new system based on the traditional one of Daniel Jones, and he used it in the revised fourteenth edition of the English Pronouncing Dictionary (Gimson 1977). Then the new Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (Procter 1978), opted for the Gimson system. And then the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (Hornby 1983), adopting the system for the seventeenth impression of its third edition, re-wrote the whole of its phonetic transcription. Now nearly all British phoneticians, textbook writers and publishing houses use the system. Given this background one would expect Finnish textbook writers and Finnish publishers to follow the newly recognised convention. However, this is not the case: Finnish textbooks continue to use Daniel Jones' old set of symbols, thus creating the regrettable situation where (Finnish) textbooks print one thing and (British) dictionaries print another. The Gimson set of symbols for RP vowels is presented below in Column (1), and the old Daniel Jones set, still used in most Finnish textbooks, is presented in Column (2):

(1) Gimson		(2) Daniel Jones	
iː		iː	
ɪ		i	
e	eɪ	e	ei
æ	aɪ	æ	ai
ʌ	aʊ	ʌ	au
ɑː	ɔɪ	ɑː	ɔi
ɒ	əʊ	ɔ	əu
ɔː	ɪə	ɔː	iə
ə	eə	ə	eə
ɜː	ʊə	əː	uə
ʊ		u	
uː		uː	

The choice of set (2) is particularly bad, I think, for Finnish learners because of the deep psychological reading habits that Finns bring with them when trying to learn the new phonetic symbols: Finnish learners 'know' that the same symbol (letter) is always the same sound and a different symbol (letter) is always a different sound. Moreover, pairs of short and long vowels in Finnish are basically the same as far as quality is concerned; certainly most naïve speakers of Finnish think that this is true. In other words Finns also 'know' that the only difference in Finnish between ä and ää, between u and uu, and so on, is a matter of duration, and this is symbolically stressed by the fact that the same letter is used in orthography for both short and long. Set (2), therefore, clearly seems to suggest that English short and long vowels (viz. [i] - [i:], [ɔ] - [ɔ:] and [u] - [u:]) differ in the same way as vowels do in Finnish, differing only in a matter of duration. But this is emphatically not the case: the difference in vowel *quantity* is in fact far less important for the differentiation of RP vowels than the difference in vowel *quality*. Set (1), Gimson's set, makes the difference in quality and quantity explicit, using a different symbol for quality variations, and using the presence and absence of a length mark for quantity variations. The difference in symbols is, of course, extremely significant.

The visual confusion of set (2) can be easily demonstrated by consulting any of the textbooks which use the set. At random I have chosen an example from Target 1 (Rönty et al. 1976). The following is taken from the presentation of the conventions of the transcription system (P.130):

8. [u] a) oo: book, look, took, book, stood
b) u: bull, bush, full, pull, push, put

9. [u:] a) oo: too, zoo, tooth, moon, food
b) u: June, rude, duty, music, pupil

Because of the symbols used here, [u] and [u:], it appears to the naive Finnish learner that the vowel sounds of the words in section 8 only differ from those in section 9 in a matter of duration, i.e. if [u] is short, then [u:] must be the same but only longer. This is perhaps easier for me to present silently here on the written page by going in the opposite direction (from 9 to 8) and by taking too and book as my examples: if [u:] is long, then [u] is the same but only shorter, i.e. if too is pronounced as [tu:] then book must be pronounced with the same vowel quality but only shorter; thus book rhymes with Luke. Although a teacher or a recording could explain and clarify the conventions used, set (2) is

by itself totally unsatisfactory.

I am not alone in feeling that the Finnish tradition of using Daniel Jones' so-called "broad" system is regrettable. Enkvist once said the following:

> It must be admitted that the "broad" form of the international phonetic alphabet which is at present used in most of our textbooks is singularly ill-suited for English teaching in [Finland]. Two objections to the "narrow" alphabet are likely to be voiced. The "broad" form has [...] gained a foothold in Finland and acquired the weight of tradition. The inevitable answer is: the more reason then to abandon it quickly, before the weight of tradition becomes a crushing load. Then it might be objected that the "broad" transcription is cheaper to print and easier to write and type. This is no doubt true. Still, the interests of the subject should come first, ways and means second. If our textbook writers insist, the publishers will no doubt sooner or later comply and equip themselves with the necessary fount.

Enkvist, however, said this 30 years ago, way back in 1957! (Enkvist 1957)

KEYS TO THE SYMBOLS

Not all the problems are over for the textbook writer once the accent of English and the set of phonetic symbols have been decided on. Not by a long way. The next problem is how to explain the values of the symbols used. Again if learners can listen to their teacher (assuming the teacher has a good accent of course!) or listen to a recording, then life is much easier. But here I am concerned with how textbooks present sounds silently: how do Finnish textbooks encourage learners to pronounce the phonetic symbols accurately and with anything other than a Finnish sound?

Textbooks vary enormously in the amount of help they give learners in this tricky field. Many textbooks provide phonetic transcriptions of all new words (admirable!) but then fail to give any indication at all as to how the phonetic symbols are to be interpreted (incredible!): there is no key at all as to what the strange symbols mean! In other textbooks the information provided is frequently incomprehensible, misleading or downright wrong. The following example concerning how to articulate [ð] and [θ] is from Say it in English 8 (SIIE 8, Oksanen et al. 1981:121):

ð	soinnillinen th-äänne	this	[ðɪs]	the	[ðə], [ðɪ]
θ	soinniton th-äänne	thirsty	['θə:stɪ]	bath	[bɑ:θ]

For a Finn who does not know how to produce (and does not produce, cannot produce) a dental fricative this information is not exactly self-explanatory. But worse is to come for [ʃ] and [ʒ]:

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ʃ »suhiseva», soinniton s-äänne shop [ʃɔp] push [puʃ]
ʒ »suhiseva», soinnillinen s-äänne jug [ʤʌg] orange ['ɔrinʤ]

While one might accept the perfunctory description of both [ʃ] and [ʒ], one just cannot accept the examples given for [ʒ] since they contain the affricate [ʤ] and not the fricative [ʒ]! Incredibly the key is "corrected" in the next volume of SIIE, in SIIE 9 (Oksanen et al. 1982:138): the first example now does contain the sound [ʒ], but the second example has been left exactly (and confusingly) the same as before:

ʒ »suhiseva», soinnillinen s-äänne usually ['juːʒuəli]
orange ['ɔrinʤ]

The palatoalveolar place of articulation of [ʃ] and [ʒ], together with the lip-rounding required for these two sounds, is of course a problem for Finns. But it is debateable whether the explanation provided in Nyky-englannin keskeinen sanasto (Miettinen & Uotinen 1983:9) is any better since it presupposes a knowledge not only of Swedish but also of German and French:

[ʃ] = ensimmäinen äänne saksan sanassa *schön* ja melkein sama kuin ruotsin sanassa *skön*, esim. [ʃain] (*shine* loistaa, paistaa).

[ʒ] = soinnillinen [ʃ], sama kuin ranskan sanoissa *je* [ʒə] t. *Genève* [ʒə'nɛːv]. Esim. [meʒə] (*measure* mitta).

However, the description of [θ] and [ð] in this same vocabulary book is in its way excellent:

[θ] = äännetään selvimmin siten, että kielenkärki hyvin höllästi koskettaa ylähampaita niin, että kielen ja ylähampaiden väliin jää pieni aukko, esim. [θin] (*thin* ohut).

[ð] = edellinen, mutta soinnillinen, esim. [ðen] (*then* sitten).

The major problem in this matter of providing a key for independently learning learners is not so much a problem of clarity as one of quantity, i.e. how much information to give. Some key must be provided, but how far should textbooks go? What, when it comes to mispronunciation, are the limits of listener tolerance?

Let me give some examples.

Most textbooks fail to indicate that fortis plosives should be aspirated when prevocalic and initial in a stressed syllable; they fail to warn the learner that if, for example, Pete is pronounced as ['piːt] rather than ['pʰiːt], listeners will hear beat. This, I feel, is a serious omission: mistakes of aspiration can and do lead to breakdowns in communication. However, consider the following explanation which is again

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taken from Nykyenglannin keskeinen sanasto:

> [k],[p] ja [t] ääntyvät painollisen vokaalin edessä aspiroituina, so. niiden yhteydessä kuuluu heikko [h]-äänne, esim. [kʰʌm] (*come* tulla) [pʰɑ:s] (*pass* kulkea ohi), [tʰeɪkn] (*taken* otettu).

The description is excellent, but it is not 100% accurate: the fortis plosives are not aspirated, for example, if there is [s] in front of them. Thus spit is pronounced as [spɪt] and not as [spʰɪt]. But is complete accuracy of description necessary? What level of phonetic sophistication should textbooks aim at? What degree of accuracy should we demand from our learners and what degree of inaccuracy are we in fact prepared to tolerate?

SEGMENTAL SOUNDS REVEALING PERSONALITY

And what about those segmental features of pronunciation which native listeners use to make judgements of personality? Should we worry about those? Personality portrayal is a subject usually discussed only in specialist phonetics textbooks, but is it a subject that can be safely ignored? For example, English alveolar and palatoalveolar sibilants are notoriously difficult for Finns to produce accurately, but how often do textbooks tell learners that native listeners take postalveolar s's to mean childishness and that severely retracted s's suggest drunkenness? Or take the dental [t̪] typically produced by Finns: for the native listener this implies that the speaker, if a woman, is a very little girl (is "girlish"), and, if a man, is effeminate. Significantly the Englannin frekvenssisanakirja [Ahti 1976:10] gives an excellent description of how the English [t] is produced ("t:tä äännettäessä kielenkärki koskettaa kitalakea huomattavasti taempana kuin Suomessa"), but it fails to say why the alveolar place of articulation is so important.

I could give more examples here of personality interpretation based on the pronunciation of segmental units, but basically the question is this: with beginners and intermediate learners are we aiming at a pronunciationn which simply allows communication with a minimum level of disturbance from mispronunciation, or are we trying to encourage something which approximates more closely to native-like ability and (at the same time?) to awaken our learners to the social psychological reactions of native listeners to different accents and styles of pronunciation?

The whole area of the non-verbal vocal portrayal and recognition of personality is highly complex with, as far as I know, no practical course books of any kind yet having been written on the subject. But in spoken discourse people not only read personality into the segmental sounds they hear but reveal themselves through the segmental sounds they use. I am not suggesting that much can be done in introductory and intermediate language textbooks, but I wonder if enough attention has been paid yet to the social psychological reactions of native listeners to English spoken with a Finnish accent. Mispronunciation can easily be dismissed by the unwary as merely a foreign accent, but mispronunciation also involves the presentation of a whole spectrum of personality traits, the interpretation of which is culture bound: the rules for interpreting Finnish sounds are not the same as for English sounds.

WEAK FORMS

If I now move on from individual sounds to the level of whole words, and in particular to Weak Forms, I can again illustrate the problems of how much information to present in a textbook and of how precise that information should be.

English has a set of some forty or so very common words (mainly pronouns, prepositions and auxiliary verbs) which have two possible pronunciations, the more common weak form and the rarer strong form. Here are a few examples:

	Weak Forms	Strong Forms
for	[fə]	[fɔ:]
from	[frəm]	[frɒm]
to	[tə]	[tu:]
as	[əz]	[æz]
at	[ət]	[æt]
there	[ðə]	[ðeə]
and	[n]	[ænd]

Gimson (1977:xxiii) talks of the problem of presenting such words in a dictionary, but his comments are just as valid when considering the presentation of such words in school textbooks:

> A pronouncing dictionary is obliged, if it is not to enter into exhaustive complications, to record primarily the citation forms of words. Such a practice is nevertheless misleading as regards those words (grammatical items such as pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions, etc.) which invariably have a different pronunciation when

> unstressed in connected speech. An analysis of their occurrence in connected speech indicates clearly that the weakened form is overwhelmingly the most frequent. [...] It must be emphasised that the strong forms are typical only of the citation pronunciation and of the rarer stressed (contrastive) instances to be found in normal discourse.

Finnish textbooks tackle the problem in different ways, sometimes ignoring it, sometimes recognising it but handling it (I think) badly, and sometimes deciding on a good compromise.

Wings: What's the World Coming To? [Lukion englannin kurssi 5] (Wilson et al. 1982) seems to ignore the problem completely, even though the level of competence of the readers is presumably high enough for them to come to terms with it. In the vocabulary lists account for (P.83) is given no transcription at all, so missing the opportunity to show that for is pronounced as [fə *], not as [fɔ: *]. Contrast with ray of hope (P.89), of which only ray is transcribed, [rei], and where no attention is drawn to the weak form [əv].

New Deal 2 (Hopkins et al. 1982) seems somehow ambivalent. For example, no transcription is given for the weak forms in sense of duty (P.120) or in at one's disposal (P.151). But transcriptions are given for of, [əv], in turn-of-the-century (P.87), House of Commons (P.127) and in spite of (P.145). ACE 1 (Leitola & Talari 1984:15) is similarly ambivalent: how do you do [hau də jə du:], but [bət] and not at all [nɔt ət ɔ:l], but must [mʌst], her [hə: *] and your [jɔ: *].

And SIIE 8 (Oksanen et al. 1981) clearly illustrates the problems of priorities in presenting weak and strong forms. For example, in the *Englantilais-suomalainen sanasto* at the end of the book (P.148) there is the following entry:

for [fɔ: *],[fə*]	prepositio: varten
for ever [fər 'evə *]	ikuisesti, ikiajoiksi 32E
for instance [fər 'instəns]	esimerkiksi
for sale [fə 'seil]	myytävänä

For the initial entry the strong form [fɔ: *] is given first and then the weak form [fə *], but the subsequent examples all (correctly) use the weak form. So why in the initial entry is the strong form given first and the weak form given second? If we remember what Gimson said, surely the weak form should be given priority.

ELISION AND ASSIMILATION

The problem of the presentation of weak forms could be called a problem of authenticity, of naturalness. If our learners use strong forms they will certainly never be misunderstood, but they will certainly never sound natural, never be able to speak smoothly, rhythmically and effortlessly. A similar problem arises with the presentation of elision. Native speakers commonly elide sounds in certain words. For example:

Christmas	['krɪsməs]
murderer	['mɜ:drə]
literary	['lɪtrɪ]
always	['ɔ:wɪz]

The fact that such elision takes place and is normal is quickly confirmed by an examination of the spelling mistakes made by native English children who are learning to write: young children write what they hear/say, not what they think they should hear/say. Children do not know how words are spelt; they have no mental pictures of what words look like; they have an aural memory of words, not a visual memory. And so they write, for example, the following:

libry	(= library)
tempry	(= temporary)
grampa	(= grandpa)
ham bag	(= handbag)

In other words the normal pronunciation of e.g. handbag elides the 'd' and assimilates the 'n' to [m]. Children do not hear the 'd' and therefore do not write it. Thus if our learners say ['hæmbæg] with a 'd' they will be understood, but they will not sound natural. So what should the transcription in a textbook present? With or without elision? Should it be ['hændbæg] (as it is in Procter 1978) or should it be ['hæmbæg] ?

Let me give some more examples of assimilation. The following words are all normally pronounced (in normal speed colloquial conversation) with the word-internal assimilation which is shown:

infant	['ɪmfənt]
involve	[ɪm'vɒlv]
utmost	['ʌpməʊst]
admit	[əb'mɪt]
Blackpool	['blæppu:l]
spaceship	['speɪʃʃɪp]

Children's spelling mistakes are again powerful evidence of the reality of assimilation:

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carbord	(= cardboard)
samwig	(= sandwich)

But again, should our textbooks give the transcription with or without the (normal, correct) assimilation?

Assimilation also occurs of course across word boundaries:

that pen	['ðæp 'pen]
thin person	['θɪm 'pɜːsn]
good cat	['gʊg 'kæt]
this shoe	['ðɪʃ 'ʃuː]

And again a couple of examples from children's writing:

tim box	(= tin box)
hop pot	(= hot pot)

But here it is perhaps easier to argue against the transcription of assimilation because the words may become separated: tin is only pronounced as [tɪn] if followed by a bilabial sound. We do not want our learners saying e.g. ['tɪm 'kæn]!

PROSODY

The presentation of segmental features of pronunciation in textbooks is quite difficult enough without worrying about prosodic and suprasegmental features. But should textbooks totally ignore these features? It is clearly too much to expect textbooks written for beginners and intermediate learners to go into lots of detail about the use of pitch movement, speed and volume (let alone the use of voice quality/voice setting) to convey grammatical, semantic and affective information. The subject is difficult enough for advanced learners. And yet, since prosodic and suprasegmental features are so important in spoken communication, can textbooks totally ignore them? Some people will argue that the subject is far too complicated and some will argue the opposite (e.g. Pennington & Richards 1986:209: "[...] the micro-perspective on phonology needs to be complemented by a macro-focus on voice-setting and prosodic features."). Not surprisingly, few textbooks tackle the subject. One which does is All Set for English (Luukas et al. 1978). The following is a section entitled "Answering the Phone" (Luukas et al. 1978:59):

Intonation
Make sure - that your voice rises sharply at the end.
4402 Read: *double four oh two* ↗
- that you sound friendly. Smile when you speak!

33725 ↗
Mr Fuzzle's office. ↗ | His secretary / Miss Clever | speaking. ↗

Fuzzle speaking. ↗

Sales Department. Good morning. ↗

Personnel Department. ↗ Can I help you?

It is laudable that even this extremely limited information concerning intonation is given, but the rising arrow printed *after* the sentence is pictorially unsatisfactory: on which syllable does the rise start? Or does the rise take place only on the last syllable of the sentence? A better convention would be to print the arrow and the pitch level *through* or *on top of* the words, as in the following example from Intonation Practice (Thompson 1981:61):

Alan ~~Would~~ you like to ~~come to North Wales~~?
Sarah I'd love to.
Alan ~~D'you~~ fancy a ~~bit of mountaineering~~?
Sarah ~~Yes, that'd be~~ marvellous.

At another level intonation, together with speed, volume and voice quality, signals not just personality but also affective meaning. For example, a rise-fall pattern may signal surprise, amazement, a low fall sadness, a fall-rise hesitation or some reservation, and a high rise flippancy, casualness (O'Connor & Arnold 1973). A generally narrow pitch range is considered (by Englishmen) to be unpleasant, unfriendly, while a wide pitch range is authoritative, firm, definite. A generally high pitch (Mrs Thatcher before her voice training! - Atkinson 1984:111-121) is associated with an emotionally excited, unstable and irrational person. A relatively fast tempo is thought to signal a more competent and socially attractive speaker than a slow tempo (Street et al 1983) while a slow tempo signals boredom, despair, or possibly a weighty judgement. Low volume suggests a weak submissive speaker, an introvert. Whisper, or low narrow pitch, implies sorrow (Williams & Stevens 1972, Couper-Kuhn 1986). A breathy voice (particularly in women) hints at sexual arousal (real or pretended) (Henton & Bladon 1985) ... Everyone agrees that more research into this highly complex subject is needed before we fully understand the English system of prosodic features and voice settings. However, enough is known about English intonation patterns used in basic grammatical structures (statements, imperatives, yes/no questions, WH-questions, tag-questions)

and in basic semantic contrasts (definite/indefinite, finished/unfinished, closed/open) (Cruttenden 1980, 1986) for at least some reference (explicit or implicit) to be made to them in textbooks. Certainly some use of arrows or contour lines for pitch movement is possible, as well as a greater recourse to novel-writing techniques like the following: "he mumbled sadly in a low voice"; "she squealed with excitement"; "he announced gravely in a slow deliberate way"; "she panted breathily in his arms, hot with excitement". The danger has been, and still is, that learners, wrongly believing in the complete universality of suprasegmental and voice quality parameters, transfer certain parameters from Finnish to English and end up experiencing severe intercultural misunderstanding (Gumperz 1982).

CONCLUSION

The problems facing textbook writers attempting to present sound on the silent written page are enormous. How can (or should) sound be transcribed? What sound should in fact be presented? And how much sound, or refinement, should be given? A lot depends on whether the purpose of the presentation is to develop perceptive or productivve abilities and, of course, on whether the learners are beginners or advanced. Technical printing problems (and the publishers) also play a limiting role, but space is likely to be an even more restrictive factor for once all the grammar, vocabulary and cultural background has been fitted into a textbook, how much room is left for sound? How much room should indeed be given to sound? Curiously fashion and trends rather than practical learner determined needs and goals may also dictate what the writer and publisher offer, that is if Pennington and Richards (1986:217) are to be believed:

> Currently, acquisition or communication-based methodologies do not assign a central role to direct instruction in pronunciation, nor do many bilingual education models which set the goal as intelligibility rather than native-like phonology. It is assumed [...] that target-like pronunciation will eventually result from interaction with native speakers in naturalistic settings and cannot be achieved through formal instruction.

Fortunately textbook writers, like teachers, are not the slaves of methodologies that applied linguists fighting over their pet theories would perhaps like to think they are. Unfortunately, though, no one really knows (not even eclectic, down-to-earth, feet-on-the-ground teachers) whether greater attention to the teaching of pronunciation would lead to a

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greater improvement in L2 ability. If pronunciation is important, how important is it, and just how important (or indeed worthwhile) is the silent presentation of sound in textbooks?

NOTES

1. The transcriptions I have seen are all phonemic and yet they all use square brackets, [ ], traditionally used for phonetic transcriptions. I shall follow the same practice here and use square brackets.

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